

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 ABIDJA 02350 081737Z  
ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 EA-07 IO-13 ISO-00 ORM-02 DHA-02 SSO-00 NSCE-00  
VO-03 SCA-01 INSE-00 SY-05 FBIE-00 INRE-00 CIAE-00  
INR-07 NSAE-00 SS-15 NSC-05 L-03 EUR-12 DODE-00 PRS-01  
/085 W  
-----081743Z 074687 /46

O R 081706Z MAR 77  
FM AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2376  
INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA  
AMEMBASSY ROME  
AMEMBASSY TOKYO  
USMISSION GENEVA

CONFIDENTIAL ABIDJAN 2350

ROME FOR INS

GENEVA FOR REFUGEE AFFAIRS

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: SREF, ET, US  
SUBJ: ASYLUM REQUEST (MENGESHA, ZAUGE MELAKA)

REF : (A) STATE 048555, (B) 75 STATE A-5895

1. SUMMARY: ZAUGE MALAKA MENGESHA CAME TO EMBASSY MARCH 8, 1977  
AND IDENTIFIED HIMSELF AS FORMER FIRST SECRETARY OF ETHIOPIAN  
EMBASSY IN TOKYO. STATING THAT HE HAD STRONG REASONS FOR BELIEVING  
HIS LIFE WOULD BE ENDANGERED IF HE RETURNED TO ETHIOPIA, HE  
REQUESTED ASYLUM IN THE U.S. END SUMMARY.

2. MENGESHA STATED THAT HE HAD SERVED IN ETHIOPIAN EMBASSY IN  
TOKYO BETWEEN 1966 AND 1976, AND WAS FUNCTIONING AS CHARGE AT

THE BEGINNING OF ETHIOPIA'S REVOLUTION. DURING THIS  
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PERIOD, HE WROTE A NUMBER OF REPORTS TO HIS GOVERNMENT DEALING  
WITH THE REACTIONS OF JAPANESE POLITICAL CIRCLES TO DEVELOPMENTS  
IN ETHIOPIA AND THEIR JUDGMENTS ABOUT THE ULTIMATE FATE OF THE  
SELASSIE GOVERNMENT. THE GIST OF THESE REPORTS ACCORDING TO  
MENGESHA, WAS THAT THE JAPANESE DOUBTED THE MILITARY'S DESIRE TO  
OUST THE EMPEROR.

3. THESE REPORTS LATER FELL INTO THE HANDS OF THE DIRGUE AND THIS, TOGETHER WITH THE FACT THAT HE WAS RELATED TO THE EXECUTED PRIME MINISTER MAKONNEN, FORM THE BASES OF MENGESHA'S FEARS. HE CLAIMS TO HAVE INFORMATION FROM OTHER CONTACTS INDICATING HIS NAME IS ON THE GOVERNMENT'S BLACK LIST.

4. TO INVESTIGATE THIS LAST RUMOR, MENGESHA DECIDED TO TAKE LEAVE OF ABSENCE FROM TOKYO. THE ETHIOPIAN GOVERNMENT SENT HIM A TICKET TO RETURN HOME, BUT MENGESHA WENT TO KENYA INSTEAD. HE THEN DECIDED TO PROCEED TO IVORY COAST WHERE HE EXPLAINED HE WOULD "FEEL SAFER". HE IS CURRENTLY STAYING IN AN ABIDJAN HOTEL.

5. EMBOFF SUGGESTED MENGESHA CONTACT IVORIAN GOVERNMENT WITH HIS REQUEST BUT HE DEMURRED, STATING THAT HE DID NOT SPEAK FRENCH AND THE FACT THAT IVORY COAST CONTINUES TO MAINTAIN DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH ETHIOPIA COULD MAKE HIS POSITION HERE AWKWARD. THE POSSIBILITY OF ASSISTANCE FROM THE UNHCR WAS ALSO RAISED, BUT MENGESHA REITERATED HIS DESIRE FOR ASYLUM IN THE U.S. EVEN AFTER THE DIFFICULTIES INVOLVED WERE EXPLAINED TO HIM. MANGESHA HAD EARLIER SENT HIS WIFE AND CHILD BACK TO ETHIOPIA. HENCE THE ASYLUM REQUEST WAS ONLY FOR HIMSELF.

6. MENGESHA PLANS TO RETURN TO EMBASSY NEXT WEEK TO OBTAIN RESPONSE. REQUEST DEPARTMENT ADVISE.

7. WOULD APPRECIATE ANY RELEVANT INFORMATION EMBASSY TOKYO CAN DEVELOP.

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NNN

## Message Attributes

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**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
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**Disposition Date:** 22 May 2009  
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**Disposition History:** n/a  
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**Review Markings:**  
Margaret P. Grafeld  
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